(b) whether any expert opinion from leading wildlife conservation organisation has been obtained on the likely impact of this project on the wildlife, both flora and fauna;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) According to the Project Report and the Site Inspection Report, only following mammals are sited near the project site:

1. Porcupines
2. Mongoose
3. Hare
4. Fruitbats
5. Rats

(b) Since these mammals are not amongst the rare and endangered species and the project site does not form a part of any National Park or a Sanctuary, the expert opinion from leading wildlife conservation organisation was not contemplated in this case.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Distribution of Forest Land

2535. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kerala Government distributed the forests land on lease to anybody else for cardamom plantation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether the cardamom cultivation and the lease of land satisfies the relevant provisions of Forest Protection Act, stating whether any violation of the law has been noticed; if so, the action taken by Government to protect the reserve forest land?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Government of Kerala had been assigning the lands in Cardamom Hill Reserve & Periyar Reserve in Idduki District to private persons including tribals as per the provisions of Cardamom Rules. It was revealed recently that the land that was being assigned is legally notified

forest land and its assignment cannot be done without prior approval of the Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Kerala Forest Department has reported that 10836.7147 ha. of forest land has been given on lease to 8749 persons.

The Government of Kerala has appointed a Committee headed by the Additional Chief Secretary with the Revenue Secretary and Forest Secretary as members to oversee the eviction of all encroachers from the area. The State Government has also appointed one man Commission (Additional Chief Secretary to State Government) to go into all the aspects of the illegal occupation and to ascertain if there are any lapses on the part of the Government Officials.

Community forest management in Chhattisgarh

†2536. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank has provided any loan to the Chhattisgarh Government under the Community Forest Management Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the area to be included, district-wise, under this programme; and

(c) the target fixed to complete the above work?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No. Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Impact of delayed Environmental Clearance

2537. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of Central and State level projects of public importance are pending for approval of the department of Environment and Forests because of strict rules of this department;

(b) if so, the details of such projects; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.